

8  
*The Sin against the Holy Ghost.*

---

A  
S E R M O N  
PREACHED

AT THE  
NEW JERUSALEM TEMPLE,  
IN RED-CROSS-STREET,

NEAR CRIPPLEGATE, LONDON,

*Feb. 28, 1796=40,*

On MATTHEW XII. 31, 32.

WHEREFORE I SAY UNTO YOU, ALL MANNER OF SIN AND  
BLASPHEMY SHALL BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN: BUT  
THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST SHALL  
NOT BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN. AND WHOSOEVER  
SPEAKETH A WORD AGAINST THE SON OF MAN, IT  
SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM: BUT WHOSOEVER SPEAKETH  
AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST, IT SHALL NOT BE FOR-  
GIVEN HIM, NEITHER IN THIS WORLD, NOR IN THAT  
WHICH IS TO COME.

---

BY MANOAH SIBLY, N.H.S.  
AND SERVANT OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

---

*London*

PRINTED BY R. HINDMARSH,

PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES,  
OLD-BAILEY.

And Sold by the AUTHOR, No. 35, Goswell-street; at the  
Temple, Red-Cross-street; and by all Booksellers  
in Town and Country.

1796=40.





---

S E R M O N   V I I .

T H E

S I N   A G A I N S T   T H E   H O L Y   G H O S T .

---

MATTHEW XII. 31, 32.

*Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*

---

**P**ERHAPS no one subject has more occupied the mind of the humble christian, than this now before us, it being no uncommon thing for persons in soul distress, to judge themselves included amongst the deplorable and unhappy, who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, which can never be forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come.

The variety of opinions, hitherto formed of this point, are too numerous for our present purpose to enter into, nor perhaps would it be of any essential use; suffice it to say, that this subject, as to it's true and genuine import, together with the rest of the Word, could not be known but by a previous knowledge of the science of correspondences, now revived to the church in the Lord's second advent; without which, the whole of the Word, notwithstanding men's fanciful interpretations thereof, is a sealed book; and however volume has been written upon volume, as expositions of the sacred oracles, for want of that, they have only served as so much mud and filth, to interrupt and foul the pure streams of heavenly truth, from the Lord through the Word, in it's entrance into the heart of the poor and needy; who, although they may have sought earnestly and constantly for water, found none; instead of simple truth, which should, as a way-post, point direct to heaven and eternal life, found the path strewn with briers and thorns, and endless entanglements. And although men have  
con-



confirmed such their fanciful interpretations from the letter of the Word, that will never the more prove it to be genuine truth, because the letter of the Word is so written, by the way of appearances, that it may be equally brought for the confirmation of what is false, as of what is true.

The thus using the Word, to confirm such fanciful interpretations from ignorance and innocence, is what is here meant in our text, by speaking a Word against the Son of Man; and if with this, the spiritual sense is internally denied, or a life of evil practised, then is committed the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

But, however, not to assert dogmas without a reasonable proof, we will endeavour to open and illustrate the subject from the light afforded in the New Jerusalem dispensation.

It is observable, that our text speaks of sin in a two-fold point of view; first, as sin that may be forgiven; and secondly, as sin that

that can never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come: the difference being, that the former is pointed out to be a sin against the Son of Man, the latter as the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

In order for us to understand the meaning of both kinds of sin, and the distinction between each, it is necessary that we see what is meant by the Son of Man, and what by the Holy Ghost; the christian church, more especially at this period, having no genuine conception of either, being the true ground why there has been no certain and substantial knowledge hitherto of the subject before us.

By the Son of Man, and by the Holy Ghost, none other is to be understood but the Lord as to his holy Word: by the Son of Man, the Lord as to the literal sense of the Word; and by the Holy Ghost, as to the spiritual sense.

That the Son of Man means the Lord as to the Word in the literal sense, will be apparent



parent from the frequent use of the term by the Lord himself, who is thus called in the Word, as all the prophets were, because of his representative character; for in no other sense was he the Son of Man, being from conception and birth the Son of God.

That by the Holy Ghost is also meant the Lord as to the spirit of the Word, or it's internal glory, will be evident from this consideration, that there also the Lord is as to his divine proceeding; the Holy Spirit being not a distinct person from the Lord, but a divine emanation of heat and light, as goodness and truth, from the Lord; who, in his person, is Father and Son, united as soul and body. Therefore, we read of the Lord sending the Holy Ghost from the Father, and breathing upon his disciples, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

That the Holy Ghost is not a distinct person from the Lord, but what proceeds from the union of humanity with divinity, will be evident from what the Word says, John vii, 39, *The Holy Ghost was not yet, because that*  
*Jesus*

*Jesus was not yet glorified*; the divine proceeding before that union, being simply called, as in the Old Testament throughout, the spirit of the Lord or Jehovah.

To speak a word against the Son of Man, which shall be forgiven, means to interpret the natural sense of the Word, from ignorance or innocence, according to the appearances of things, as they exist before the senses of the natural man. The natural sense of the Word, for the most part, is all written in these appearances: hence we read therein that God is angry, revengeful, that he casts into hell, &c. These are only appearances, the genuine truth, in the internal sense, being entirely opposite: but so far as the belief of them has a tendency to cause man to abstain from evil, because he would not offend God, his thus thinking from appearance is forgiven him, that is, it is not imputed to him, forasmuch as it is done in simplicity, and leads to obedience.

That the word against the Son of Man is remitted, is (as observed before) because, in  
the



the natural sense of the Word, for the most part, genuine truths are cloathed, very few, if any, being left entirely naked; the Word, in the letter, being very fitly compared to a man cloathed with a robe, his face and hands only exposed. Wherever the Word thus appears, there are the genuine goods and truths of heaven, as received by angels; hence, such as it is throughout in it's spiritual sense, when it's robe is cast off; the reason of which places being left without a covering is, that there may be no deficiency to the man illustrated from the God of the Word, by eyeing him alone, as his object of love and faith, for the confirmation of genuine goods and truths.

The Word is such, in it's literal view, that it may serve as a basis and foundation to the spiritual sense, adapted to the apprehension of the simple, in it's appearances of truths, who are unable to perceive, or do the things perceived, except as from this reason, because they so read in the Word, and the simple in faith and heart are not yet able to elevate themselves above these appearances; and although this is the word against the Son,

B

of

of Man, yet it is not the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, for them to interpret the Word according to such appearances, provided they do not form their principles of faith from such appearances, confirming them to the destruction of genuine truth.

As for example, such parts as these, when read by the simple: *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my blood, the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon and his angels, and they overcame them by the blood of the Lamb.* It strikes them, from the appearance in the letter, that the Lord endured the passion of the cross for the sake of our sins; and that by his cross and blood, he has redeemed us from hell. This, because it appears a truth, and may be so spoken and believed, does not damn the simple in faith and heart. But to make this a point of our faith and doctrine, and to confirm it to that degree, as at length to believe, that thus God the Father became reconciled to man, whereby the mind necessarily makes a  
division



division of the Deity both in person and essence ; and further, that by faith in this, man is alone justified before God, and saved without any good of charity, that is, without good works ; to be in this principle, both in doctrine and life, is the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is not able to be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. The genuine truth being, that redemption did not consist particularly in the passion, it being the whole work that our Lord did on earth from first to last ; consisting in man's deliverance from hell, by divine truth, to which blood corresponds.

We now come to speak to the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. We have already observed, that by the Holy Ghost, we are to understand the Lord as to the genuine truths of the Word, from whence it's holiness is derived, and from whence it can alone be seen to be holy ; because, take away it's internal spiritual sense, and it will not appear any thing more than any other book, yea, as to elegancies and

graces of language, we see it far surpassed by many merely human compositions.

The internal spiritual sense of the Word is the Holy Ghost or Spirit, because the Word and the divine proceeding are the same, the Word being nothing but the proceeding emanation of heaven's sun, as light or truth, and which is holy, because it flows united with it's heat or goodness; and therefore, the more interior the view, or the more elevated the prospect, the more holy; that is, the more the heat is felt with the light, the more goodness is perceived with the truth.

This being the true meaning of the Holy Ghost, we see this part of our text applicable to the revelation of the spiritual sense, now made known in this second advent of the Lord, which is a coming, not in person, but in the power and glory of his holy Word unfolding it's holiness.

Hence, in the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, are included these two ideas; in the first place, a denial of the Word altogether;



gether; and, in the second place, the adulteration of it's goods, and falsifications of it's truths. Whoever are thus found acting, shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come.

We observe, first, the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost consists in the denial of the Word; this may be easily seen to be an unpardonable sin, inasmuch as the Lord is the Word, in his divine proceeding from his divine human. Wherefore, all who deny the Word, deny the Lord, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, the true God and eternal life; for, however deists may talk of a God with their mouths, internally in their hearts they know no God but nature; for, by the denial of the Word, as a divine revelation, they deny all that teaches and can instruct into the first principle of religion, namely, who is the Lord; consequently, they interiorly deny that there is a heaven or a hell; they also deny the church and all things belonging thereto. And men who deny these things, in reality are atheists; they may with their mouths talk of creation proceeding from some first grand cause,

cause, from some Deity or God, of whom they have no conception ; but, never looking above nature, it is impossible that they can see their God beyond it; and the origin of all these horrid negatives takes it's spring from the denial of the Word. Whoever are thus situated as to the state of their minds, burst through all communications and connection with the Lord, whereby they also become separated from heaven, which is conjoined to him in love and faith by means of his Word; and when man becomes disjoined from the Lord and heaven, he becomes associated and united with hell, with devils, and satans there. Therefore, how careful ought men to be, how they permit any thought or affection to have place in their mind, which is derogatory to the holiness of the Word.

But in the next place, by the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, we may also understand the adulteration and falsifying of the Word in it's goods and truths, because, as before proved, the Holy Ghost not only means the Word in general, but particularly as to it's genuine goods and truths in it's bosom,



som, adapted to the perception of the angels of heaven, namely, as in the spiritual sense: and those who (as observed) confirm their evils and false principles and practices from the Word, because of some appearances in the letter, they adulterate and falsify all it's spiritual goods and truths, in which the angels of heaven are principled; whereby the sin against the Holy Ghost is committed, which can never be remitted, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.

It is the same also, if the Lord and his divinity is denied, (because the Lord and the Word are one,) as was the case of the pharisees of old, of whom the words in our text were literally spoken. They said, that the Lord did miracles by the power of Beelzebub, and had an unclean spirit, instead of seeing the divinity within the humanity. Hence also we may see, that this sin is also committed by such, who, although they may acknowledge the Word with their lips, yet deny the Lord's divinity, as the Socinians and Arians do; as also is the case with those, who, from a confirmed principle, invoke the Father  
for

for the sake of the Son, because, by all such, interiorly, the Lord's divinity is not seen in the humanity; hence, when they come into another life, they are let down amongst those who actually deny the Lord. The reason is, because God is one in essence and in person, in whom is a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and this triune God is none other than the Lord in the divine human; consequently all heaven is alone formed from the Lord, all in heaven being in the Lord, and the Lord in them, as the branches are united to the vine; hence, they who deny the divinity of the Lord, can never be admitted into heaven, and be one in the Lord, because it is impossible a man can be conjoined in heart and soul to that which he denies.

This sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is also committed by those, who so far exclude the goods of love and charity from the medium of salvation, depending upon faith alone, as to suppose, that goodness can neither save, nor evils damn, provided they have but faith. All of this class adulterate and falsify the genuine goods and truths of  
of



of the Word in it's internal sense, which teach nothing throughout but love to God, and charity to man, in principle and practice, as the only true and proper preparation for heaven and eternal life; and such manifest their adulterations and falsifications, in ascribing every thing which the Word teaches concerning love, charity, and good works, to their faith alone.

It is a most essential thing to know, that the marriage of goodness and truth is in all and every part of the Word, from the marriage of divine love and wisdom in the Lord; and hence also, the marriage of charity and faith, as adapted to the will and the understanding of man; and when charity is taken away, the celestial marriage is destroyed in the soul, and spiritual adultery takes place, that adultery so often spoken of in the Word, when viewed in a spiritual light. This was the reason of the Jews being called an adulterous generation, because they adulterated all the goods of the Word, by placing their dependance upon their external rituals of religion corresponding to

C

faith

faith alone, instead of removal of evils and purification of heart and life. Hence our Lord told them, however they might put on an external appearance of sanctity, yet inwardly they were hypocrites, and such who abhorred the Lord, his righteousness, and all the goods and truths of heaven; and cannot be received into heaven, because heavenly loves are discarded, and the mind is occupied with none but earthly, namely, the loves of self and the world: and when these occupy the internal, the external works are all evil, however fair the outside, these being infernal loves when separated from heavenly, or when exalted above them; they are loves which ought alone to occupy the man as to his feet, and celestial and spiritual loves, the head and the body; but, celestial and spiritual loves being trodden under foot, these infernal loves fill the man from head to foot. Wherever this is the case, the words of our text are truly applicable, the sin and blasphemy being committed against the Holy Ghost, which can never be forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come; the man having made up his life entirely of hellish



lish loves from head to foot, it is impossible he can, by any means, be forced or withdrawn therefrom ; because that would entirely annihilate him, which is contrary to the divine order in which God created him, possessing an immortal soul.

Here it may be necessary to observe a distinction between those of the former class, who make faith alone to be the only medium of salvation from confirmation in themselves, and those who take up the opinion, or believe it, because it is the doctrine of their church, and they have so learned from their parents, teachers, or from reading of books ; hence, however they know something of such a faith, yet they neither affirm, approve, or deny it. There are many of this class, in the old christian church, at this day, who thus are simple-minded as to what they have received, their fundamental principle in themselves being, that they ought to live a good life, and abstain from evils, because the Lord has so commanded in his Word : these, however in doctrine they may be in faith alone, yet cannot be said to sin and blaspheme against the

Holy Ghost, as in regard to their living well, they do not adulterate the goods of the Word; and in regard to their simplicity, in what they receive as doctrine, in not interiorly confirming or denying it, they do not falsify it's truths, many of them not viewing faith to be anything else, than to believe in the Word; the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in it's evil and false ground, and also in it's consequences, not being comprehended by them, because they have never brought their understandings to it.

From these things thus observed, may be seen wherein consists the word against the Son of Man, which may be forgiven, and the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which cannot be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come; namely, that the word against the Son of Man is spoken by those who regard the natural sense of the Word, and doctrines drawn therefrom, (which are all appearances of truths, but not genuine truths,) still living in obedience to the commands of the Word; and that the sin  
and



and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is either to deny the Word altogether, to deny the Lord's divine to be in his human, or to adulterate the goods and falsify the internal truths of the Word, by living an evil life, or by the previous confirmation of false doctrine, from whence they can never be withdrawn in time or to eternity.

Do we desire to reduce the subject to self-examination, whether we are such as speak the word against the Son of Man, or more especially commit the sin and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? In the first place, it becomes us to examine whether we have learned this truth from the Word, that there is but one God, who is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; that from him alone all life and light is derived; and with this knowledge, whether we also in life shun all evils as sins against this Lord God and Saviour, for it is alone according to our increase in this knowledge and practice, that we avoid both the evils spoken of in our text, as well the sin of ignorance, as that which is committed from a settled determination of the will, or  
confirmation

confirmation of the understanding. Although the word against the Son of Man may not be a deadly sin, yet we can never enjoy the true peace of heaven, only in proportion as the light of truth and the heat of good are conjoined in our wills; nay, further, we are in danger of being drawn aside by reason of our innocence, and to fall into the snares the evil spirits are laying, if possible, to catch simple ones in their net of destruction; in which case, they are drawn to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost, which can never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come, that is, neither in time nor to all eternity, it being utterly impossible, after any one has made up his life, and confirmed himself in evil and falsehood, ever to give it up, his very life, delight, pleasure, and all the man being in it; between whom and heaven then becomes a great gulph fixed, whereby it is impossible influence from heaven can reach, his heart and mind, or he ever able there to enter, to taste any of it's pleasures or satisfactions; having, by the committal of the sin against the Holy Ghost, eternally shut out from himself all the reception



tion of heaven within. Let us then beware that this is not our lot, but, by an obedient life, always keep our minds open to conviction to higher and interior truths.

Now to our Lord Jesus Christ be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

# LIST of BOOKS Sold by R. HINDMARSH.

	£.	s.	d.
1. <b>A</b> RCANA CŒLESTIA, vol. 1, 4, 5, 6.			
2. <b>A</b> Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church	0	3	0
3. True Christian Religion, or the Universal Theology of the New Church	0	16	0
4. A Treatise on the Nature of Influx, or of the Communication between Soul and Body	0	1	6
5. A Treatise concerning Heaven and Hell	0	6	0
6. Of the New Jerusalem and it's Heavenly Doctrine	0	4	0
7. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord	0	2	0
8. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Sacred Scripture	0	2	0
9. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning Faith	0	1	0
10. The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem	0	1	6
11. Of the Earths in the Universe, and their Inhabitants	0	2	6
12. The Psalms of David, with their Internal Sense	0	3	0
13. Of the White Horse mentioned in the Revelation, Chap. XIX. with curious Remarks on the Souls of Beasts, and the Life of Vegetables	0	1	0
14. A Treatise concerning the Last Judgment and the Destruction of Babylon, in 1757	0	2	6
15. Continuation of the Last Judgment	0	1	0
16. Angelic Wisdom concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom	0	6	0
17. Angelic Wisdom concerning Divine Providence	0	7	6
18. The Delights of Wisdom concerning Conjugal Love, and the Pleasures of Infinity concerning Scortatory Love	0	15	0
19. The Apocalypse Revealed, 2 vols.	0	13	0
20. The Liturgy of the New Church	0	1	0
21. Hymns for the New Church	0	3	6
22. Jehovah's Mercy, a Poem, by J. Proud	0	0	3
23. Nine Queries concerning the Trinity, answered	0	0	3
24. Wisdom's Dictates	0	1	6
25. The New Magazine of Knowledge, &c. in 20 Numbers at 6d. each, or complete in 2 vols.	0	10	0
26. The New Jerusalem Journal, complete in 10 Numbers	0	5	0
27. An Hieroglyphic Key to Representations and Correspondences	0	1	0
28. An Eulogium delivered on the Death of the Hon. E. Swedenborg	0	0	6
29. A Short Account of the Hon. E. Swedenborg and his Theological Writings	0	0	6
30. Letters to Dr. Priestley in Defence of the New Church, in which all his Objections are answered, by R. Hindmarsh	0	5	0



